

Application No.: 09/890,588

Docket No.: FHI-031USRCE

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected. Claim 1 is amended herein. Claims 3-13 are withdrawn from consideration. A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is filed herewith. Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims as hereby requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Smart, U.S. Patent No. 4,617,118. Applicant traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 recites a "central component being disposable in an operating position by a retaining claw engaging a projection on the filter housing and therein axially retained in the filter housing." No new matter is involved, as this feature is described in the specification of the present invention from page 1, last line onward and page 4, second full paragraph. The retaining claw 7 is illustrated Figure 1.

Applicant asserts that this is patentably distinct from Smart because Smart discloses no such feature. Applicant submits that locating member 53 (shown as element 63 in Figure 5) and ends 22 do not anticipate the retaining claw feature of claim 1, as neither locating member 53, nor ends 22 engage a projection on a filter housing and therein axially retain a central component in the filter housing. The locating member 53 and ends 22 appear to merely inhibit rotation between the filter element and mounting part 1 of Smart. Although the internal helical thread 20 and complimentary thread 3 appear to secure the filter element and mounting part 1 of Smart, even the combinations of internal helical thread 20 and thread 3 with either of locating member 53 or ends 22, do not anticipate the retaining claw axially retaining the central

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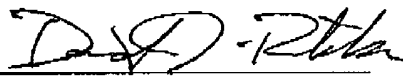
component in the filter housing, as recited in claim 1, as neither of the locating member 53 or ends 22 is capable of axially retaining a center component in a filter housing.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If any additional fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 12-0080, under Order No. HHI-031US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Date: June 21, 2004

Respectfully submitted,
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